

India's National Gay and Lesbian Magazine

PiNK

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—pages

Roy Wadia

On love, activism and
Riyad Wadia

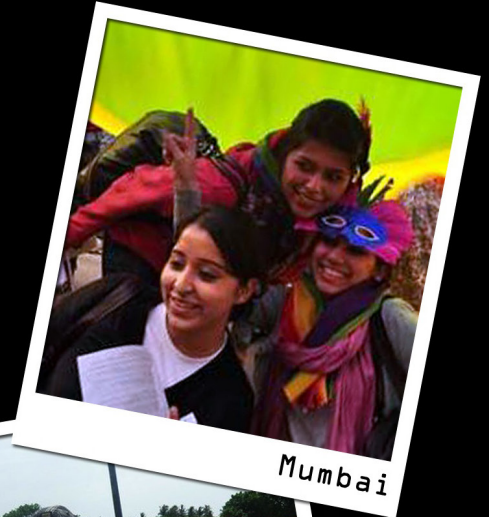
**LOVE IN
THE TIME OF GRINDR**

How Dating Apps have
changed gay Indians

SEAHORSE

An Excerpt from
the Novel, By Janice Pariat

One day,
every day will be a Pride Day.



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FROM THE EDITOR

It has been over a year since the shock verdict from the Indian Supreme Court. Another 365 days living with 377 have gone by. We protested, voiced our outrage, participated eloquently in television debates and picked up the pieces of our lives and carried on with life- at home, in our workplaces, in public places, as branded criminals just because of the love and affection that exists in our lives- how ironic can life get?

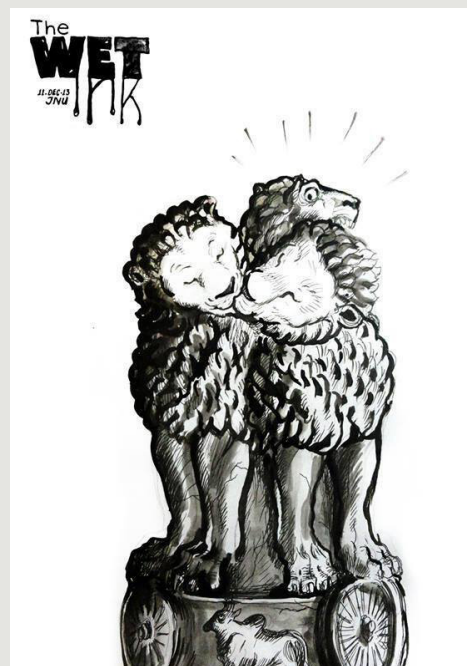
We were battered, but refused to be cowed down. We refused to go back into our closets. Gay activists were evicted from their offices as landlords refused to rent out their space to criminals. HIV activists distributing condoms were shooed away from public parks for aiding unlawful activities. Gay businesses started shutting down. But on the other hand, more and more cities- from Baroda to Kochi joined the unstoppable march of Queer Pride. Young gay and lesbian Indians continued coming out in droves. And our straight friends and family members stood by us as firm allies.

As we move into the new year with a bit of sadness in our hearts, and more confusion in our minds, we must doubly resolve to stand together as a community at war with anachronistic attitudes and laws. We must firmly support our brave activists on the streets and our brilliant lawyers in the courts. We must lobby hard- with our local politicians and business leaders to push for LGBT equality in all aspects of public life. Our rights are not limited to the issue of Section 377. This is the first battle- unfortunately prolonged beyond what we had initially expected. But as Martin Luther King had reminded us- "Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed."

Udayan Dhar

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Picture: Wet Ink, JNU

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THE INBOX

Readers' comments and feedback through social media and email

On Satyamev Jayate's LGBT episode

I am an out gay man and wish to take this opportunity to thank Aamir for his phenomenal work towards changing the Indian society for the better. I hope the show about accepting all sexualities helped lifting the stigma off homosexuality in India to a certain extent. Some real life stories on the show were in line with some grave personal experiences that I went through during my teenage. I hope the show in India kicked off a positive momentum towards a snowball effect.

- Vineet Malhotra

On MTV's new gay lead character

I just didn't like the fact that, his looks and attitude changed after coming out.... people are, who they are. They don't have to change his dressing sense or hair style or talking style, otherwise this kind of sub plot would just make viewers aware of the fact that we, the homosexual kind exists but it won't make them hate us less. Just stating my view, rest the producer-director decide if they are reading this at all.

- Manav Sen

On India's stand in UN on LGBT rights

If only the community had come together when it mattered and not voted for Modi, realizing that in no way is silence a gesture of solidarity. Who should have known that better than us?

- Anahita Sarabhai



*I just didn't like
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ple are, who they
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Picture: Roy Wadia at the Kaskish Film Festival, Mumbai

ROY WADIA: ON LOVE, ACTIVISM, AND RIYAD WADIA

BY UDAYAN DHAR

Roy Wadia speaks to Udayan Dhar about his work, life and the fight against AIDS.



Picture: Roy and Alan

Roy Wadia has assumed multiple roles in his lifetime- from working These days he is based primarily in his hometown Mumbai (which he still calls Bombay) and lives with his mother at Worli, although he tries to spend as much time in Vancouver every few months with his husband Alan. He spoke to Udayan Dhar about his work, life and the fight against AIDS.

You've been travelling in and out of India for a long time- how has your relationship with the country, especially Bombay changed?

I had a typical elite South Bombay childhood and I was never unaware of the privileged background I came from. However, I always felt, and still feel to some extent, a sense of disconnect with the people around me- both within my extended family and in my neighborhood. It was almost like I wanted to escape from India- which is what I did!

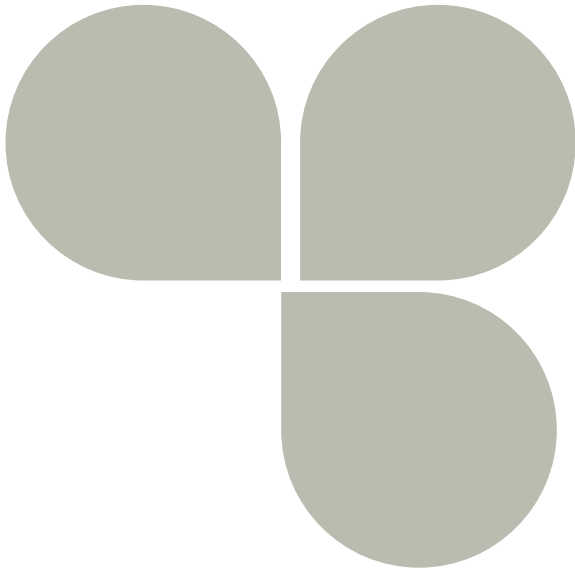
How was life in the United States?

In 1986 I got admission at the University of Georgia where I did an MA in Journalism, after earlier having done my BA in English Literature/Psychology at St Xavier's College and an MBA at the SP Jain Institute, both in Bombay. UGA is also where I met Alan in 1989 - who went on to become my life-partner - we've been together almost 26 years now.

I joined CNN a year later, and had a great time during my twelve years there - based at CNN's global headquarters in Atlanta but supervising and liaising with, for many years, a team in Hong Kong. I launched and supervised many international news and feature programmes, including most of CNN's Asia-Pacific news programming. I also reported on-air from time to time - including CNN's first-ever report on AIDS in India - and served as field producer on special assignments.

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For me it was a surprise - especially because he seemed to know I'm gay as well.



*He taught me so much
- through his honesty,
his generosity, his love
and his suffering.*

In late 2001 I quit CNN, deciding to do something different but didn't know what at the time. Eventually, in 2003, after a year of media consulting in Delhi and other places, I ended up moving to China- WHO hired me as their communications officer and spokesperson, first as a consultant and then on a fixed-term basis. My work there ranged from risk and crisis communications on emerging infectious diseases like SARS and bird flu to HIV/AIDS and other issues. I moved to Canada in 2006 to work on health communications with the provincial government in British Columbia, and to get married to Alan – Canada has had same-sex marriage for a while now.

In 2010 though I had to return to Bombay to take care of some property litigation and be with Mum. For three years I headed Parmeshwar Godrej's now-defunct NGO, Heroes AIDS Project, and for the past year I've been working as an independent media consultant for WHO and other UN agencies. Although I feel I've been lucky to have diverse roles in different places, I still don't know whether my career can be called a career!

How did you react to your brother Riyad's coming out? How did his untimely death impact your family?

In 1993 I returned home after five years when my mother told me about Riyad's coming out. Frankly, for me it was a surprise- especially because he seemed to know that I'm gay as well. I always wondered why he came out to our mother first! Riyad was someone who you can describe as "in your face" with his activism and unabashed admission of who he was and how he carried himself, with so much pride, dignity and flamboyance – though that alone does not describe what Riyad as a person was.

I was heartbroken at his death- so was the family. I never understood why he did not take medication- it continues to baffle me... I mean, he could've lived a perfectly healthy, fulfilling life for many, many more years. I know people who have been living with HIV for three decades now.

Even so, in his relatively short life, he packed more into his 36 years than many folks do in many lifetimes. He revived Wadia Movietone, the banner that our grandfather pioneered in 1933, and made India's first-ever gay-themed film BOMgAY, which made waves around the world. Also, he taught me so much – through his honesty, his generosity, his love, and his suffering.

So what next for you, Roy?

I've primarily been in Bombay for the last five years now- and while it's been great reconnecting with friends and enjoying the social and cultural scene, I must admit I'm dismayed by the way India is being shaped by government and influential societal leaders alike. There are amazing folks doing amazing things, yes, including in the NGO world and the corporate world under the new buzzword "corporate social responsibility", but when it comes to so-called social values, the hypocrisy of people frustrates me! My family is mired in a nasty court case that's fuelled by corruption and greed and relying on the justice system alone to get justice is such a challenge – honesty is seen as a weakness. I'm hoping to be with my Alan again under the same roof as soon as this gets settled, whether it's in Canada or wherever life takes me next.



LOVE IN THE TIME OF GRINDR

BY ADITHYA KUMAR

Imagine knowing that the one you were waiting for might be round the corner. How is he?

“Up like a rocket ship
And down a-like a roller coaster
Back a-like a loop-dee-loop
And around a-alike a merry-go-round.”

As I listen to Freddy Cannon singing about how he found love in Palisades Park I think love must've been so much easier to find in the 60s and 70s. Not for gay men as much mind you. Just as I imagine going down the tunnel of love with the cutest guy and we kissing at the end of the tunnel. This pleasant train of thought is interrupted by my phone chirping.

I see two new messages on my Grindr. Both the messages highly unacceptable to be

read out loud as they describe explicitly the details of the family jewels of the not-so-young discerning young men who seek to woo me. Then come the platitudes they compose of pleasures they would provide me if I said yes. Flattered as I was, I quickly pressed delete. Delete, delete, and goddamn delete everyone from existence. I mentally strike a Meena Kumari pose. "Nahi", why this torture? Alas after a couple of more minutes of moaning and mentally berating myself to have swallowed that steak and a slice of torte that afternoon I go back to my favourite book. Someday, someday I tell myself...

Grindr appeared on the scene a couple of years back. Along with it came the tagline of finding your true love, companionship... pretty much a mound of whatever and was accepted wholeheartedly by the gay crowd. As Android developed rapidly, one of the must haves for every gay Android phone user was this app. Imagine knowing that the one you were waiting for might be round the corner. Now is he?

Back then if I had this app I might've been more apathetic. Now this app has become more of a glorified booty calling service. Seriously, no jokes at all. I downloaded this app quite late, mostly out of curiosity and the fact that at the rate that I was going in I would probably die alone with a copy of Harry Potter close to my chest. Being brought up with cousins who were mostly girls I pretty much had an idea that "Love is the eternal song that never leaves you and fills you up with happiness" and Celine Dion crooning over the helm of a sinking ship. Hence my ideas of love were pretty much set. No seriously, when I go online I ask myself "Is love too much to ask for? A date, no, ok, how 'bout a cup of coffee at least?" I look up at the ceiling of my room and pray to all thirty million Vedic gods hoping for one tiny ray of light. And the conversation before it starts goes straight to the point, "You top or bottom?" I reply,

"Me no interested". Good riddance and I delete this imposing little conversation.

So then I start sifting through the denizens of this alternative electronic mini-verse- the good, the bad, and the flaky. As I go through the "indigenous fauna" present I come upon three distinct types of men. Let's call them the inane, the hungry and the horndogs.

The inane are those who proudly display their masculine bearing in all its glory, flexing their muscles or the lack of it, some (thankfully) dressed with faces so pouty you'd think they had an allergy of some sort in their lips, or smiles so shiny you need a pair of welding goggles before you look at them, and some just plain intimidating because you know they are not going to reply even if you were dangling from a cliff sending out a distress call. These are the guys you message once, then twice and but you never get a reply from. I once messaged one of them. Two days later I found my message still unopened lying in my inbox. They are the ones who believe the world revolves around them, if not they know how to make it.

Inane ones are the top of the block, everyone lusts after them like crazed fans at an Elvis Presley concert. Then come the hungry. These are men looking to just get laid. They'll spout any old lies to convince you that you have found the perfect guy. One of them messaged me saying "Hey, wanna do sex? I have eight inches long" I wouldn't have gone within a 10 mile radius. I politely say no and then hold my head in my hands hoping I could throw a tirade like Beyoncé in her song 'Why don't you love me?' smudged mascara and all. Then come the horndogs. They're the above 50 looking for below 30. You get the idea right?

No matter how many red velvet brownies I swallow, paying no heed to my rapidly expanding waistline to drown my sorrows, they do not go. Maybe because I



My parents would still love their son as such, whether gay or staright.

was brought up in a liberal household that taught me how good boys ought to have behaved. I get it, I'll never get a Taylor Lautner lookalike to go out with me, but no harm in trying right. Right?

So I jump into the fray bravely, this time aided by a friend of mine who believes she has a natural intuition when it comes to guys. We start going through men. After the first couple of dozen I notice that her eyebrows have disappeared into her scalp. I couldn't agree more. With names like "hunglover69" and "biggerthanyou-think" and the kind of photos some of them put up I did expect any girl to have a bit of starting trouble helping her gay best friend find a soulmate. She politely excuses herself for a minute.

After two hours, seven packets of Lays (again I'm ignoring my waist here) we hit up the right one. "Okay, I hope this works out!" I tell her. I send out the casual heys and hellos and wait for a reply. He replies. Yes we both shout and proceed to high five each other as though we just won the grand prix. As the conversation progresses, with polite advices and interjections on how to proceed, I ask the dreaded question. "Do you think, you and I could like go on a date?" to which he replies "I just had a break-up, not ready for a relationship yet, it was nice talking to you though", I look positively stricken. "What happened?" she asks. I say. She gives me a murderous look. While I contemplate throwing my phone out of the window, I have to restrain her from finding any sharp objects around the room.

I meekly say "On the bright side it was fun right?". The look she gave me would've melted the polar ice caps. I looked away to prevent my brain from haemorrhaging. Even Carrie would've had second thoughts there.

Where are the guys from the Z.A.Maxfield

novels I read saying things like, "I need you so much every molecule in me hurts to be away from you"? Coincidentally in every story the protagonist is an average, whatever kind of guy (should I say any more ?) and the guy who falls for him is a Greek god, tanned, sculpted, quoting Tolkien and Shakespeare which according to him is as normal as you and I exchanging books or stories.

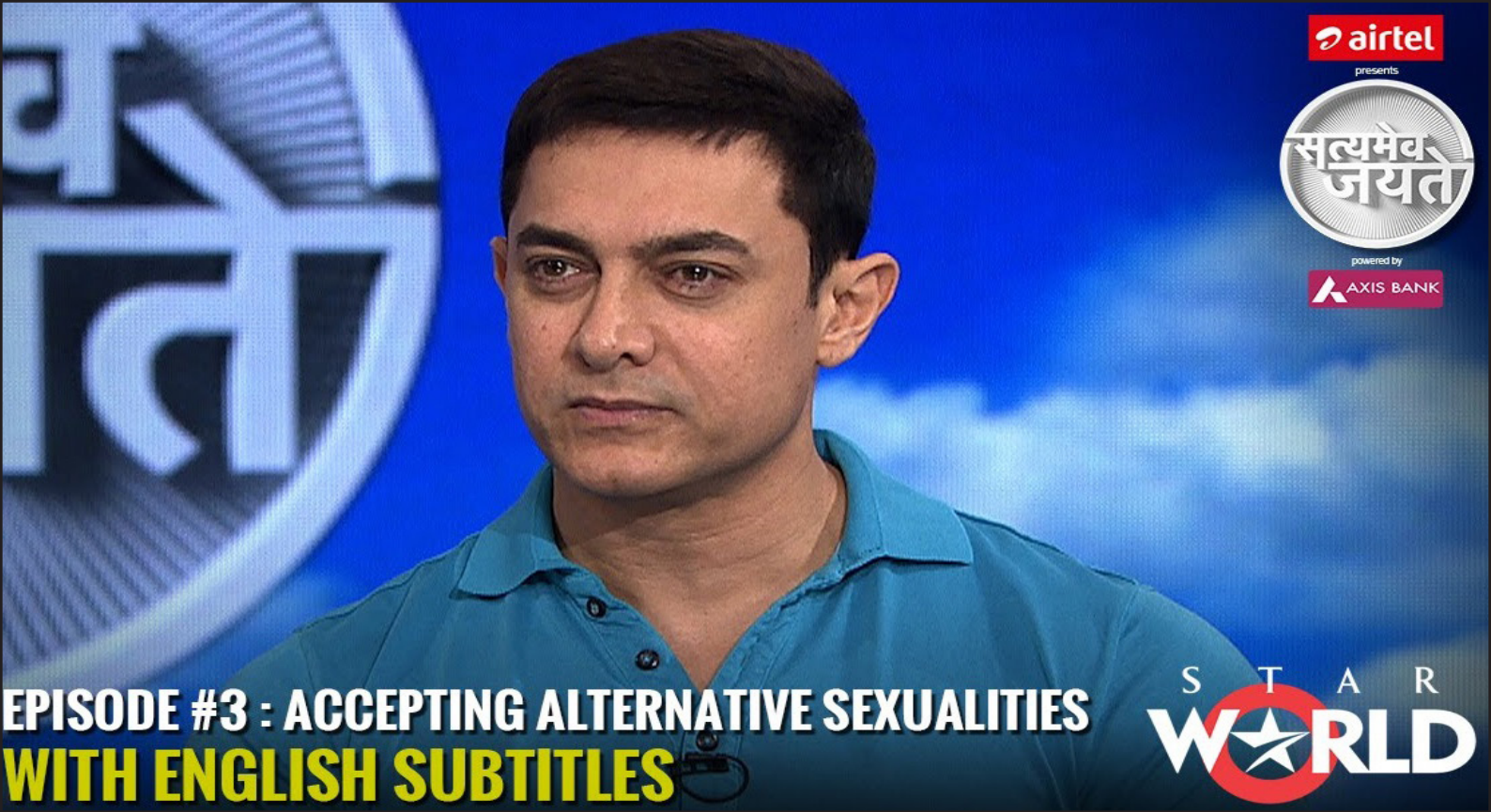
Once I took the courage and went out with one of them. To my great relief he does not turn out to be a serial killer or axe murderer. After a less than enjoyable movie which was constantly interrupted by his "wise" commentary on pretty much each and every aspect of the film, starting from the heroine's wardrobe till the villain's name. I cry on the inside like a champion as he rambles on and on about his various sexual conquests and I tell myself, "You are a strong boy you've handled worse than this." How wrong could I have been? As I reach my room I quickly down two painkillers and smoke a couple of cigarettes to drown out all the noise in my head. I even shut my ears to prevent any of the words from seeping out and causing the surroundings to burn. Why did it affect me so much? Probably like he and Sasha Pieterse from G.B.F. exclaim, "Are you sure you're gay? You don't even sound like the ones on Bravo". I'm not fabulous enough. Not bitchy enough. The thing is, I'm not a cliché. Even though I've been to many places and I have an open minded approach to things, I'm quite old fashioned when it comes to that department. We all complain of discrimination, but this? I can't even explain this.

Now I have deleted that app. I'll go the old fashioned way now. Go to a bar perhaps or a club. Meeting guys like that. I don't know if I'll be lucky. Love is much more difficult nowadays and so is safety. But compared to then, now I'm sure the odds are somewhat in my favour.



//

*Go to a bar perhaps
or a club. Meeting
guys like that. I don't
know I'll be lucky.*



EPISODE #3 : ACCEPTING ALTERNATIVE SEXUALITIES
WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

STAR
WORLD

HOW SATYAMEV JAYATE TAUGHT ME TO LOVE MYSELF

DEVASHISH SHARMA

As a gay person, I have always lived life in darkness trying to hide myself and protect every inch of my identity from this alpha heterosexual society.

I always felt like I was sustaining my life on the leftovers of my straight friends. I have vicariously enjoyed their first crush, their first kisses and love proposals. But when cupid struck me there was no friend with whom I could share the deepest desires of my heart.

My first flush of youth was the most depressing- even suicidal phase of my life. After all this, what hurts even most is that we

still have to deal with and fight back prejudices and stigma attached to our identity. For many in society, it's easier to mock and bully, than to understand.

But something unusual happened on 19th October. I like Satyamev Jayate a lot and was eagerly waiting for the episode. Imagine my surprise when I realized that this time the show is discussing the very sensitive subject of alternative sexuality! For all my life I wished people would understand and accept me and here I was watching gay and lesbian Indians talking about their lives- while the audience was grappling to understand, even as



it was clear that they had their own fears and doubts on this issue.

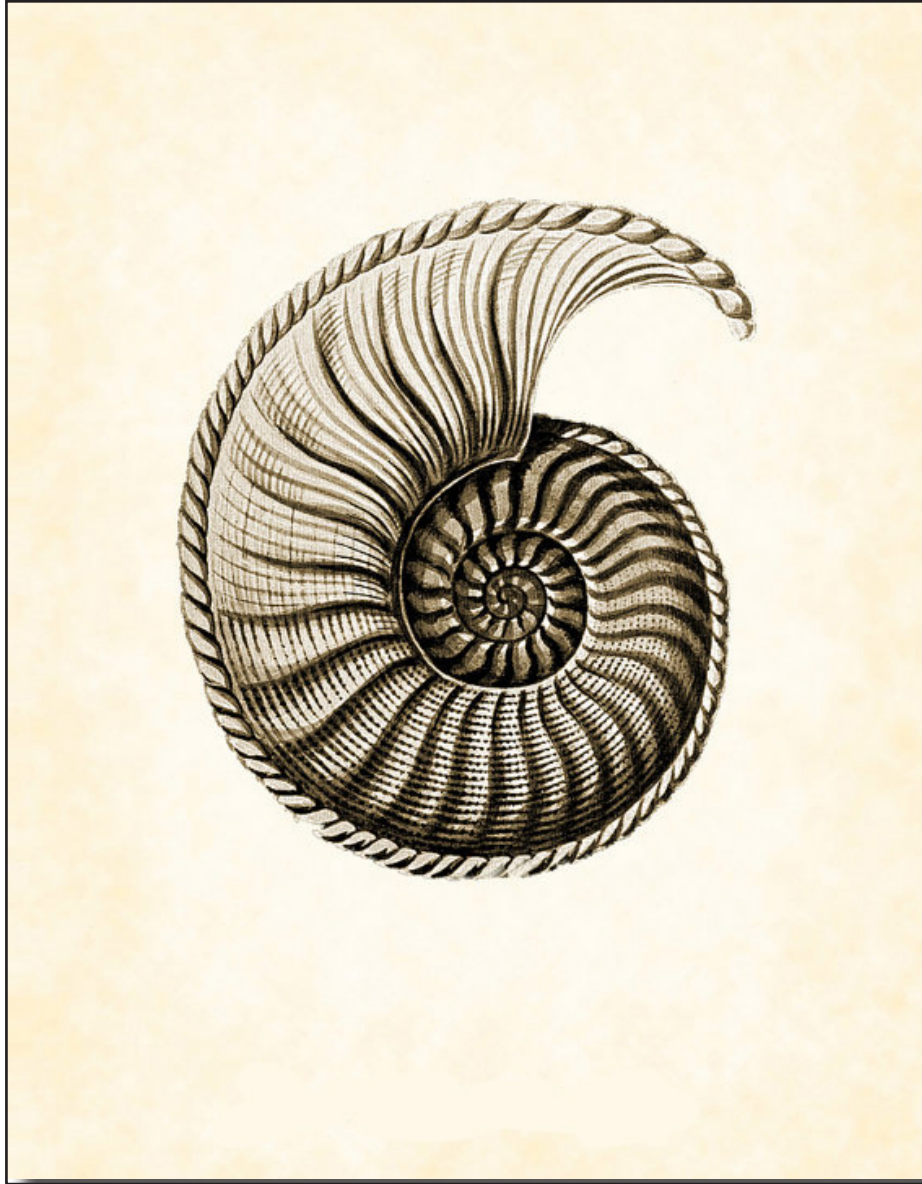
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The episode taught me to love myself and gave me the strength to come out and fight for my rights.

The touching story of Ghazal and her supportive parents finally proved that love between parents and their children should be unconditional and all parents should try to accept and support their children just the way they are. I wept listening to the struggles of Simran even as my own attitude to life changed after watching this episode.

Kudos to Amir Khan and all those members and supporters of the LGBT community who participated in the show, and tried to generate some awareness. Now I live with a hope that some kind of change is happening and after listening to the positive responses that this episode generated even among straight audiences, I feel more confident about my identity as a gay Indian. I believe that my big Indian dream where every person irrespective of their caste, creed or sexuality is accepted and respected is alive and is taking shape due to the efforts of these inspiring people who are doing so much.

This episode taught me to love myself and gave me the strength to come out and fight for my rights.



SEAHORSE

An Excerpt from the Novel

BY JANICE PARIAT

“My songs, lords of the lyre, which of the gods,
what hero, what mortal shall we celebrate?”

– Pindar

I remember the moment I discovered Nicholas' disappearance as though it were yesterday. Although perhaps that's not quite an accurate way to phrase it. Yesterday may be further away than

two years past, than ten, or more. For instance, I can't recall my supper a week ago, but that morning remains palpable on my tongue, like a wine I've sipped, and sipped so long it colours everything else on my palate.

It was June, but early enough in the day for the air to still be mild, the sunshine glimmering around the edges, warning of

the heat to come. I'd arrived at the New Delhi railway station at dawn, and even at that time, it was intensely crowded, with hustling uniformed coolies, and families recumbent on the platforms, waiting for trains that never seemed to arrive. I hurried back to my room in the north of the city in a taxi, the roads clear and quiet, still spared from the office rush. The Red Fort unimaginably beautiful. After only a quick shower to wash away the grime of a two-day journey, I headed to the bungalow on Rajpur Road. I was in a hurry, I took the shortcut through the forest. When I reached, the security guard wasn't at the gate, and the wicker chairs and table on the lawn nowhere in sight. Around the edges of the garden, flower beds glowed with early-blooming African daisies and hardy summer zinnias.

I remember, as I walked up the porch, dusty and littered with leaves, how it crept into my heart, a rush of something like love.

When I tried the door, it opened easily. The bungalow lay still and silent, everything in its place. The dining table set, as though for ghosts, with plates and cutlery, the living room tidy with cushions, neatly brushed carpets, a vase of flowers. I headed straight for the bedroom, expecting to find Nicholas sleeping, tangled in a sheet, dream-heavy. The smell of him in the air, swirling, the patient creak of the fan. He wasn't there.

The bed was made in neat, geometric precision. His things – an extra pair of glasses, a fountain pen, a comb – missing from the bedside table. I walked down the

corridor to the study; in all my months at the bungalow I hadn't ever seen it that uncluttered, loose papers swept off the floor, the table relieved of tottering piles of books. Nothing was missing apart from Nicholas' things. I looked for a painting, the one that had stood on the table, of a woman holding a mirror, and it was gone. Only when I reached the veranda did something splinter, and it rushed in, the fear that had been waiting in the wings. In the corner, the aquarium, that bright and complete universe, was empty.

Nicholas disappeared in the summer of 1998, when I was twenty-one, and in my final year at university. Although perhaps I need to rephrase that as well.

He didn't disappear.

He left.

Although who's to say they're not the same?

In the bungalow, I searched wildly for a note, some sort of written explanation – taped to mirrors, or doors, or walls. Weighted by books or bric-a-brac so it wouldn't be blown away. And then I sat in the veranda and waited. For what, I'm not entirely sure. Behind me, the shelf bearing a small seashell and stone collection, to my right, the large divan covered with a sheet glistening with mirror-work and beaded embroidery. Next to it, a tall areca palm, its leaves sharp as knives, quietly wilting. The day's heat seeped ferociously through the jaali screens, the light turned white and blinding. I didn't switch on the fan, or retire inside for shelter and shade.



*I remember, as
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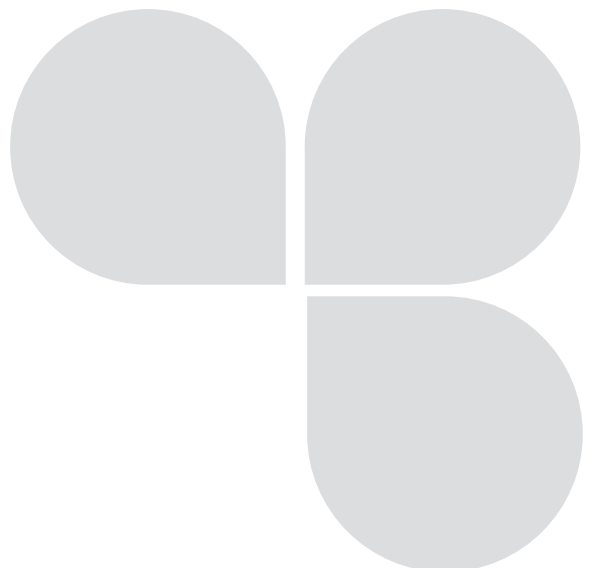
Later, around mid-day, when the silence grew deep and thick around me, I left. This time, I took the long way round, back to my room in a student residence hall in Delhi University, along the main road, willing the noise and traffic to somehow jolt me back to life. That this, as clichéd as it may sound, had all been a dream.

At first, it felt like the time I heard about Lenny. Ten months ago, my sister's voice faint and grasping on the phone...I'm sorry... There were some complications... Yet this was not death. For death leaves behind modest belongings, the accumulated possessions of people's lives, their books and jewellery, a hairbrush, an umbrella. Lenny had been my friend, I had his letters, his VHS tapes, his cassettes, and folded away in the recesses of my cupboard back home, his faded leather jacket. With Nicholas it was as though he had never existed. No life has the ability to be traceless, and leave behind scarcely any imprints. Yet he hadn't. As though a great rushing tide had swallowed the shore and wiped it clean.

The day passed as all others do, with relentless silence. In my room, I worked through my unpacking slowly – a pair of socks in the drawer, a book on the shelf, slippers under the bed – charged not with anger or despair, but faint, lingering anticipation. Something else had to happen, this couldn't be all. This wasn't the end. I'd receive a letter. Nicholas would return. Someone would come knocking on my door, saying there's a phone call. A message. Some sort of sign. An explanation. That night I went to bed in hope.

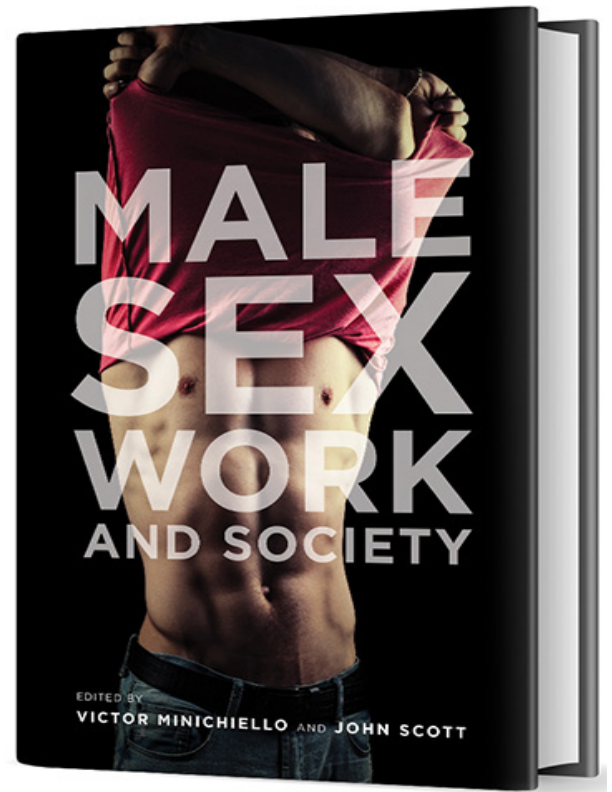
And even now, I sometimes awaken with it wrapped around my heart.

We are shaped by absence. The places that escape our travels, the things we choose not to do, the people we've lost. They are spaces in the trellis on which we trail from season to season. Nicholas and Lenny, though worlds apart, are inextricably linked. On either side of a diptych, bearing the names of the living and the dead.



THE PINK PAGES BOOK RACK

DECEMBER 2014



MALE SEX WORK AND SOCIETY

Research: Edited by Victor Minichiello and John Scott

Published by Harrington Park Press

The term 'prostitute' has become so inexorably linked to the female sex that it is unlikely one would imagine a man upon hearing the word. That perception is not only factually incorrect, but sadly enough this misalignment of reality and impression has led to a global socio-political and policy response that reflects its ignorance. The general lack of awareness on issues of male sex work, leads to (or perhaps to a certain degree even stems from) a similar paucity of attention from the academic community- where research has historically focused on female sex workers. It is in this context that Victor Minichiello and John Scott's groundbreaking new collection of essays

from researchers across the globe must be read and understood.

One of the unforeseen consequences of studying Male Sex Work is the changing understanding of sexuality that it offers. While female sex work has been largely considered through the lens of patriarchy as exploitative and degrading to women, current limitations on how we grapple with the reality of male sex work offer opportunities to study the industry via the old demand-and-supply paradigm. On the other hand, as Minichiello and Scott point out, male sex work has also challenged "the gay liberationist rhetoric, which has sometimes presented gay communities as being free of exploitation."

While Minichiello and Scott must be lauded for an intense scholarly work on a hitherto untouched territory, their biggest achievement remains that they have

managed to change the narrative of Male Sex Work from a "problem" to a "phenomenon". While providing a critically needed resource in the academic space, it manages to open up vast new avenues of research for social scientists and much food for thought for policy makers across the globe.

SEAHORSE

Novel: By Janice Pariat

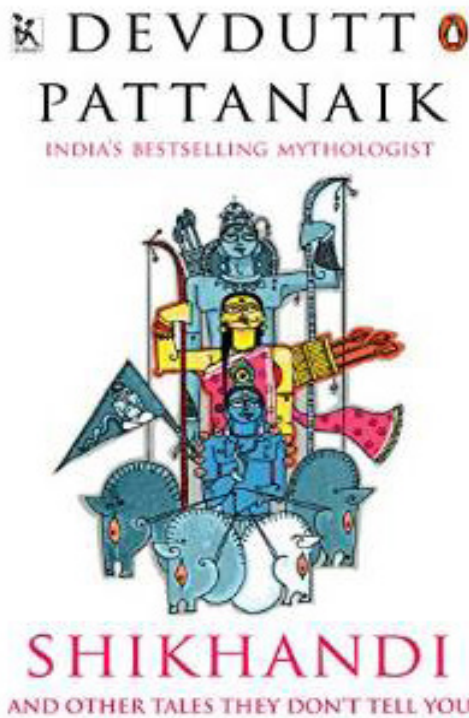
Published by Vintage Books, Random House India

Nehemiah is a student of English Literature at Delhi University when he first meets art historian, Doctor Nicholas Petrou who, as mentor, steers him into a world of pleasure and artistic discovery—transforming his life entirely.

Years later, during a seemingly innocuous spell in London as a Writer in

PRIDE CLIMBING HIGHER

STORIES BY LGBT PEOPLE FROM NEPAL



Residence, the unexpected happens—lives, like passing ships, are re-illuminated. Nehemiah is plunged into a search for the people from his past: Nicholas, his stepsister Myra, and even himself, the young, drifting boy changed irrevocably by his encounter with them.

Seahorse is a contemporary retelling of the story of the sea god Poseidon and his young male lover Pelops. The young men in these narratives must journey beyond themselves to wrestle free from the protective yet stifling gods of their pasts.

Seahorse traces how loss and healing, undoing and recreation, may eventually shape us into creatures of grace.

PRIDE CLIMBING HIGHER

Anthology: Edited by Chad Frisbie
Published by Creative Nepal

Nepal's sexual and gender minorities share their experiences in a newly published anthology

Nepal is currently at a pivotal moment with respect to the state's and society's attitudes towards sexual and gender minorities. A seemingly groundbreaking 2007 Supreme Court decision was the first ruling in South Asia to guarantee non-discrimination and equal rights. As a result, Nepal has often been lauded as South Asia's leader regarding the legal progress of sexual and gender minorities. However, the past several years have revealed that Nepal's reputation has perhaps preceded more widespread acceptance: arbitrary arrests have increased under the guise of "public indecency," Kathmandu's largest cruising area has been shut down, Nepal's largest LGBTI organization, The Blue Diamond Society, almost had its regis-

tration revoked in 2013, LGBT candidates from the major political parties were dropped as days before the 2013 elections, and, perhaps most alarming, the Ministry of Law and Justice has drafted a new criminal code that will recriminalize any non-vaginal penetrative sex.

SHIKHANDI: AND OTHER TALES THEY DON'T TELL YOU

ESSAYS: By Devdutt Pattanaik
Published by Penguin

Patriarchy asserts men are superior to women, Feminism clarifies women and men are equal, Queerness questions what constitutes male and female.

Queerness isn't only modern, Western or sexual, says mythologist Devdutt Pattanaik. Take a close look at the vast

written and oral traditions in Hinduism, some over two thousand years old and you will find many overlooked tales, such as those of Shikhandi, who became a man to satisfy her wife; Mahadeva, who became a woman to deliver his devotee's child; Chudala, who became a man to enlighten her husband; Samavan, who became the wife of his male friend; and many more.

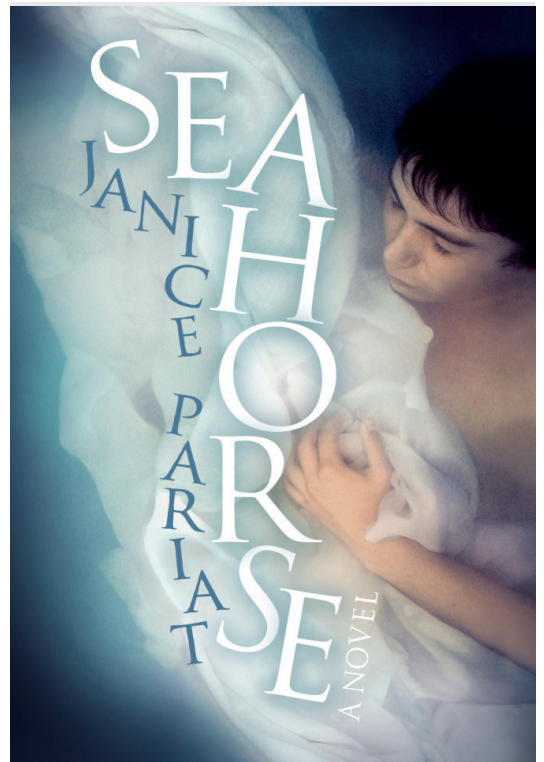
Playful and touching and sometimes disturbing-these stories when compared with their Mesopotamian, Greek, Chinese and Biblical counterparts, reveal the unique Indian way of making sense of queerness.

WARRIOR

By Olivier Lafont

Published by Penguin

The novel 'Warrior' is a high octane, action-packed story that travels all over India and beyond. The hero, Saam, is an immortal warrior who is forced to come out of hiding in today's Mumbai to pick up arms again and take to the road. His epic journey spans three days across an India torn by unnatural cataclysms, and even stranger lands. To bring back peace Saam must stoke his consuming hunger for war - but at what cost to himself? The book was shortlisted for the Tibor Jones South Asia prize





SUSHANT DIGVIKAR

On Style, Fashion and Indian men

AS TOLD TO DEV SOOD

Fashion and trends for men in India are very limited.
Why?

Fashion and trends in India are very limited because men have very rigid and stupid beliefs about what they should and should not wear. A bit more versatility might not be too bad.

Do you think Indian men are being experimental now a days?

Indian men have now really upped the glam quotient as opposed to some years back. But I still believe there is a long way to go.

Why are metro-sexual men often assumed to be gay?

This is because we love mixing up things. I have no idea why metrosexual men who take the time out to look gorgeous for their women are considered gay. It's absurd.

Do you think India has influenced international fashion in some way?

Yes, I make it a point that whenever I travel abroad I have a lot of Indian wear with me. This shows the world what we truly are made of. And yes, a lot of international designers are also influenced by Indian culture and designs.

Any style tips to Indian men?

My only style tip to Indian men is that please wear your personality. You don't have to dress up like someone to look stylish. Just because a shirt looks good on Salman Khan doesn't mean the same for you. Salman is Salman and you are you.

Your style icon?

I love Kangana Ranaut and her unabashed style. I also love Ranveer Singh because he loves experimenting. I also absolutely love Rekha and Vidya Balan because they reinforce that the sari is the sexiest garment that a woman can wear.

A man with a beard and a blue tunic is shown from the chest up, looking upwards with a cigarette in his mouth. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

COME LET'S F@!L!

FAIL THE HIV TEST, USE A CONDOM.



A Public Health Campaign By Mission for Indian Gay & Lesbian Empowerment .www.Mingle.org.in